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# HOUSING ELEMENT

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## CITY OF BLYTHE

### RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



## HOUSING ELEMENT

### Background

The California Government Code Article 10.6 requires every California city and county to prepare and adopt a Housing Element as part of the required General Plan. This element must be revised periodically, at least every five years. Availability of decent and affordable housing in a suitable living environment is a high priority for the State and the City of Blythe as well.

This element has several objectives, foremost to serve as the official policy guide for the decision makers of the City, such as the Planning Commission and City Council, and other agencies having a responsibility to provide housing to all citizens regardless of income, age, race, ethnic background or family status. Additionally, this part of the General Plan will serve as a directional aid to be used by businesses, developers and builders, institutions and non-profit organizations whose decisions could have an effect on the community and its housing.

### Regional Setting

The City of Blythe and the surrounding Palo Verde Valley have experienced erratic growth, caused in part by the nationwide decline in agricultural markets, lingering impacts of the 1981-83 recession and record high interest rates. Blythe is located in Regional Statistical Area #54, described more fully below, with development primarily occurring adjacent to the California/Arizona border along Interstate Highway 10 (I-10).

Blythe and the surrounding area depend on tourism for both taxable sales receipts and the employment base. The Colorado River, located on the eastern boundary of the Palo Verde Valley, about 1.5 miles from Blythe's City limit, attracts visitors from Arizona, the Los Angeles Basin and the Coachella Valley. The area around Blythe is mainly agricultural.

### Regional Statistical Area #54

The City of Blythe is located within Regional Statistical Area (RSA) #54, which also includes the Palo Verde Valley and surrounding communities. The area has experienced erratic growth in the past, caused in part by the difficulties encountered by agricultural industries. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) estimates population growth in RSA #54 at 3.7% for the period from 1970 to 1980. From 1980 to 1985, however, population in the RSA grew from 17,000 to 19,200, a 13% increase. SCAG projects population for the year 2010 at 27,429, a 53% increase over 1980.



## Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the proposed system on the performance of the system. The study is divided into two main parts: a theoretical analysis and an experimental evaluation. The theoretical analysis is based on the principles of the system and the experimental evaluation is based on the results of the experiments.

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Population and Housing

Population growth in the City has <sup>increased</sup> been slow, but is expected to increase with the location of a State Correctional Facility approximately 16 miles west of Blythe. Historic and projected population and housing unit growth is shown in Table III-8 below.

**Table III-8**  
Population & Housing Units  
1970 - 2010

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>POP.</u>	<u># OF UNITS</u>
1970 <sup>1</sup>	7,047	2,000
1980 <sup>1</sup>	6,805	2,468
1983 <sup>2</sup>	7,502	N/A
1986 <sup>3</sup>	7,775	2,646
1989 <sup>4</sup>	8,153	2,783
1994 <sup>5</sup>	11,682	4,577

1990 - Census  
1994 - Est.

- 1 1970 or 1980 Census of Population and Housing.
- 2 1983 Special Census of Population and Housing.
- 3 Estimate provided by Riverside County.
- 4 Estimate provided by California Department of Finance
- 5 Projection provided by Southern California Association of Governments (1987).

Population in and around the City swells during the winter months, the majority of visitors residing in Recreational Vehicle Parks in the Sphere-of-Influence and along the Colorado River.

According to a special census done in October, 1983, the median age of the City's residents was 27.1 years, 2.8 years lower than the State average. Furthermore, the City had a much higher number of young people, at 38%, than the State average of 30.9%. The population was almost equally divided between males and females, with 3,768 and 3,734, respectively. The City has a Hispanic population of 3,246 (43%), well above the State average.

The following information was obtained from the records of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, for the period 1900 to 1909.

LAND ACQUISITION

For the year 1900

Amount

Acquired	Released	Balance
100.00	0.00	100.00
200.00	0.00	300.00
300.00	0.00	600.00
400.00	0.00	1,000.00
500.00	0.00	1,500.00
600.00	0.00	2,100.00
700.00	0.00	2,800.00
800.00	0.00	3,600.00
900.00	0.00	4,500.00
1,000.00	0.00	5,500.00

Total amount acquired, 1900 to 1909

10,000.00

Total amount released, 1900 to 1909

0.00

Total amount available, 1900 to 1909

10,000.00

Total amount expended, 1900 to 1909

10,000.00

The following information was obtained from the records of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, for the period 1910 to 1919.

Table III-9  
Population by Age Group  
1983

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-19	2,840	38
20-24	634	8
25-44	2,032	27
45-64	1,287	17
65+	709	10
	7,502	100

Source: Special Census of Population and Housing, October 1983.

Table III-10  
1983 Ethnic Composition  
1983

<u>Race</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>City %</u>	<u>State % (1980)</u>
White	3,636	49.0	76.2
Hispanic	3,246	43.0	38.9
Black	520	7.0	7.6
Asian	44	0.6	5.3
Other	56	0.8	9.9

Source: Special Census of Population and Housing, October 1983.

Based on <sup>1990</sup>1989 statistics, there are 3.06 persons per household, for a total of 2,596 households with a population of 7,950 persons in these households<sup>1</sup>. Using averages established by the 1983 special census, about 76% of these households are married couples with 16% headed by a female householder and 4% headed by a male with no wife present.

Group quarters population in <sup>1994</sup>1989 totalled 203<sup>2</sup>. These quarters are defined as living situations where kitchen and/or bathrooms are shared; examples are boarding homes, nursing homes, jails and college dormitories.

<sup>1</sup> California Department of Finance, estimate for January 1, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

# 10/10/2017

Year	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2018	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2019	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2020	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2021	10/10/2017	10/10/2017

10/10/2017

Year	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2018	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2019	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2020	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017
2021	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017	10/10/2017

10/10/2017

10/10/2017

10/10/2017

10/10/2017



Household Income

In 1980, the household income in Blythe was \$13,594, well below the State median income of \$21,083. Estimates for 1986 put the City's median household income at \$17,485<sup>3</sup>. This should rise with the opening of the new correctional facility as in 1987 the average employee earned over \$31,000.00.

The State of California has designated categories for income groups as follows in Table III-11. In 1980, about 26% of households in Blythe and the surrounding ZIP Code area (92225) received Social Security income with 15% receiving public assistance.

Table III-11  
Income Categories  
Riverside County  
1980

<u>Category</u>	<u>% of Median Income</u>	<u>Income Equivalent</u>
Very Low	0-50	\$0-8,019
Low	50-80	8,020-12,830
Moderate	80-120	12,831-19,244
Upper	120+	19,245+

Source: 1980 Census of Population and Housing.

Housing Costs and Values

The California Department of Housing and Community Development defines overpayment for housing as any amount over 30% of gross income spent on housing expenses, for example, mortgage payment, interest, rent, taxes, utilities, maintenance, etc. Due to rising interest rates and utility costs, however, it is not uncommon for households to spend more than 30% for all housing expenses.

Based on the income categories established above in Table III-11, in 1980 41% of all households exceeded this 30% rule-of-thumb for housing expenditures relative to income. The percentage was nearly twice as much for renters, not an uncommon situation in many communities. With the expected rise in median household income reflecting higher average wages of State Correctional Facility employees, this percentage should decrease.

<sup>3</sup> Riverside County estimate.

The first part of the report is a summary of the work done during the year. It covers the main areas of research and the results of the experiments. The second part is a detailed description of the experiments, including the methods used and the results obtained. The third part is a discussion of the results and their implications. The fourth part is a conclusion and a list of references.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to

present the results of the

work done during the

1.1.1	1.1.2	1.1.3
1.1.4	1.1.5	1.1.6
1.1.7	1.1.8	1.1.9
1.1.10	1.1.11	1.1.12
1.1.13	1.1.14	1.1.15
1.1.16	1.1.17	1.1.18

The results of the work done during the year are presented in the following table:

The first part of the report is a summary of the work done during the year. It covers the main areas of research and the results of the experiments. The second part is a detailed description of the experiments, including the methods used and the results obtained. The third part is a discussion of the results and their implications. The fourth part is a conclusion and a list of references.

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Table III-12  
Household Overpayment for Housing  
1980

<u>Category</u>	<u>No. Households Overpaying for Housing</u>	<u>% of Total Housing Units</u>
Renter, Very Low-Moderate	698	28.3
Owner, Very Low-Moderate	314	12.7

The overpayment for housing by home owners may not be a long-term difficulty as the owner is building equity in an investment and interest payments and property taxes are tax deductible, effectively increasing income levels. Some homeowners may have paid off mortgaged indebtedness so that monthly house payments are no longer required. In 1980, 35% of all owner-occupied housing units were owned free and clear. In some cases, reverse annuity mortgages are available to such owners as a mechanism of increasing income levels. For renters, this is not the case. Additionally, renters, once the terms of an initial lease expire, may be faced with consistently escalating monthly rents or, in the case of mobile home parks, the close-out of the park itself as the land is underutilized or the park is too small or outdated to be feasibly refurbished.

The 1980 median housing value in the City was \$45,700, far below the State median of \$84,745. The non-urban nature and very slow growth of the community have kept housing costs low. Well-documented and more up-to-date information is not readily available. For purposes of determining housing costs, the newspaper serving the community of Blythe was checked for both rentals and units for sale for Friday, July 28, 1989. This survey included only those units with a sales or rental price listed. If no price was listed or rental rate advertised, the unit was not counted as part of this survey.

Three bedroom, two bath new homes (J & L Homes) were listed as starting at \$75,900 with 30-year FHA financing available with less than \$4,000 down. Resale homes listed varied considerably in price, starting at \$29,000 for 2 bedrooms, 1 bath and ending at \$175,000 for 4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths. The median selling price for the fourteen resale units listed in Blythe was \$64,250. One condo was listed for sale at \$59,500. Nine mobile homes were for sale, all previously owned, ranging in price from \$23,000 to \$89,900 (median of \$28,500). Residential lots were available as well, listed for sale at 23¢ per square foot to 85¢ per square foot (\$10,020 to \$37,030 per acre), depending on improvements. Two building construction firms in active production in Blythe have indicated that a residential lot for single-family development costs \$12,000 to \$15,000 fully improved with required public facilities.

Two new residential developments in Blythe are now underway. Blythe Chaparral Estates consists of manufactured homes on 6,000 square foot lots. The homes, 2-, 3- and 4-bedrooms with 1,128 to 1,750 square feet in size, start at \$69,950. Thirty year financing is available and the project is both VA and FHA approved. River Valley is a traditional stick-built project with 3-, 4- and 5-bedroom homes on 8,000 square foot lots. Price ranges from \$99,000 to \$119,000.





Rental units were available in three categories: houses, apartments and mobile homes. Several one bedroom houses with utilities paid as part of the rent were noted at \$300 to \$435 per month. This rose for a 2 and 3-bedroom house to \$450-460 per month. Rents that did not include utilities were about the same, ranging from \$250 for a studio apartment to \$575 for a 4-bedroom house. Several apartments were listed as Section 8 units or Housing Authority units. Blythe Villa Apartments, Broadway Manor Apartments and Sunset West Apartments were taking applications for occupancy. Three mobile homes were for rent, at \$325, \$340 and \$550 per month. One mobile home space was listed for rent at \$90 per month.

Blythe has a variety of housing types available for sale or rent. The median priced resale unit mentioned above, \$64,250, requires an annual income of \$19,275. Of the three new residential developments noted, average sales price is \$84,950 meaning a family would need an income of \$25,485 to afford the home. Mobile homes generally require less annual income as the median price of those surveyed was \$28,500, necessitating an income of \$8,550. Mobile home rents range from \$250 to \$575, depending on the type and size of unit; these rents require an income of \$10,000 to \$23,000 annually.

#### Vacancy Rates

The 1989 vacancy rate in the City was estimated by the Department of Finance at 6.72%. The Department, however, does not break down these figures based on housing vacancy due to dilapidation or need of repair. Additionally, the arrival of employees of the State Correctional Facility has most likely generated pressure on the local housing market, lowering the vacancy rate since the estimate (January 1). This is due to the relationship of vacancy rates to population growth and housing starts. Typically, population growth is necessary to trigger new housing construction. It is expected that the vacancy rate will continue to drop until new housing starts come on-line. During this time when demand nearly equals supply, those seeking housing will be forced to seek alternatives, such as housing that is inconveniently located, substandard in condition, overcrowded or meant only to be temporary lodgings, such as a motel. The State has indicated that future additions to the nearby Correctional Facility will be timed, when possible, to coincide with increased housing supply.

#### Housing Stock and Conditions

Total housing stock increased 315 dwelling units from the 1980 Census through January 1, 1989. This is a 12.8% change in housing as compared to a nearly 20% increase in population over the same time period. The first six months of 1989 accounted for 30 permits for new single family housing, five permits for duplexes and one permit for a multiple dwelling structure. It is anticipated that 50 more dwelling units will be permitted in the last half of 1989, bring the 1989 projected unit total to 110.

In 1989, as in the past, Blythe's housing stock is predominantly detached single family (1,920 units) with one 70-unit condo project. In multi-family buildings, there were 733 units. There were also a total of 60 mobile homes.



The mobile homes are generally located in three parks or on scattered sites throughout the City. Acreage designated in the General Plan as "R-M" (Residential - Medium Density) provides substantial potential for the addition of mobile home development upon approval of a conditional use permit. Mobile homes provide low-cost and starter-home options for the first-time home buyers. The low initial purchase price, transportability and low maintenance costs are attractive; however, limited life and financing options coupled with the need to lease land are detractors for potential purchasers. There is a nationwide developing trend for retired persons to purchase this type of low-cost housing. This could impact the sector of the Blythe housing market that is now devoted to mobile homes. Also, as vacancy rates continue to decline, development of mobile home parks may become more attractive. The City indicates that a mobile home park development has been proposed and is in the review process.

The outlook for the single family and multi-family markets is favorable with increased demand over the next one to two years, resulting in a higher rate of construction. If interest rate increases are moderate and suitable housing is built, strong demand for single-family units is expected to continue as the State Correctional Facility becomes fully operational. One advantage of this expanded employment base is the expectation of rising household incomes that translates into increased purchasing power for move-up housing.

A survey conducted by a private consultant in 1987 rated the condition of the existing housing stock in Blythe. Some additional survey work was completed in 1988 as part of redevelopment planning efforts in older and deteriorating neighborhoods. Housing was ranked on a scale of 1 to 6, with the following definitions applying:

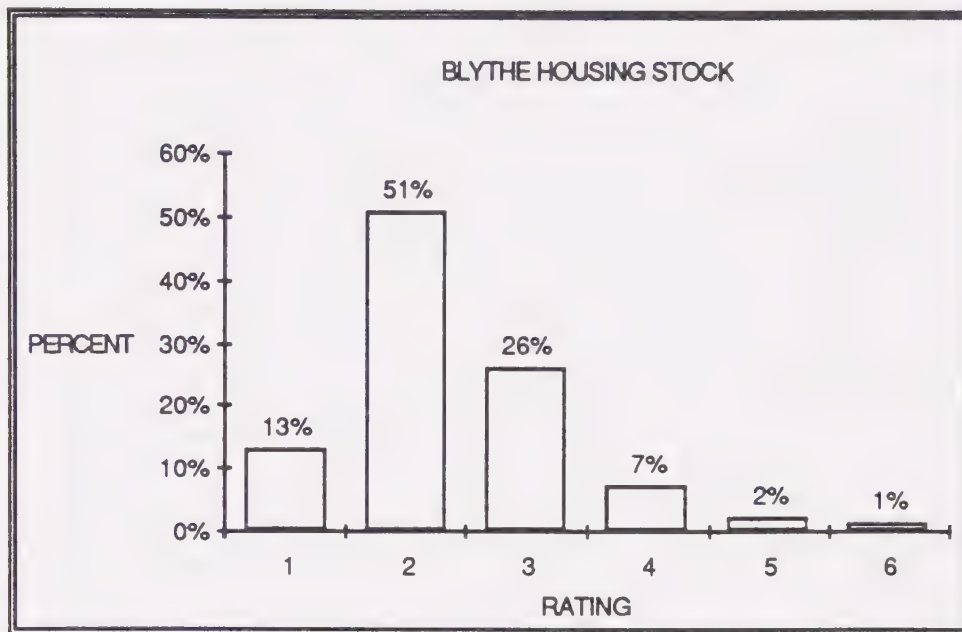
- 1 Very Good Condition, no maintenance necessary.
- 2 Good Condition, minor aesthetic maintenance necessary.
- 3 Acceptable Condition, aesthetic and structural maintenance necessary.
- 4 Poor Condition, major aesthetic and considerable structural maintenance necessary.
- 5 Unacceptable Condition, considerable delapidation, health and safety a concern.
- 6 Dangerous Condition, structure is not sound, health and safety in jeopardy.

The chart below illustrates each of the categories and the corresponding percentage of Blythe housing which falls into each.

The survey found that the majority of the housing stock in the City (64%) is in excellent or good condition with only 10% considered to in poor to unacceptable condition. The housing stock survey did not include a comprehensive visit throughout apartment buildings and condominium projects. City staff currently estimates that 70% of all housing meets minimum Code requirements; this is a substantial improvement related to an increased level of Code enforcement activity and community-wide educational efforts as well as increased demand for local housing units.







#### Housing Overcrowding

Overcrowding is defined as more than 1.01 persons per room in a dwelling unit. Overcrowding can burden public facilities and services as well as having a negative impact on the quality of neighborhood living conditions. The 1980 Census identified a total of 276 units (12%) in the City where this condition occurred. Of these, 155 units were owner occupied. As new and larger units are constructed, this percentage is expected to decline, particularly for owner-occupied units.

#### Residential Land Inventory

In 1988, there were 375 net acres of land within the City limits developed as residential uses. Given the 2,646 (1988) units identified in the City at that time, the City has an average residential density of 7 units per net acre.

There were 382 net acres of vacant land in the City designated for residential development. Table III-13 breaks down the potential buildout for this vacant land given currently designated density limits.

A density bonus of 25% for development of affordable housing has been proposed in this General Plan and approved conceptually by the City Council; the Zoning Ordinance will be amended in late 1989 or early 1990 to reflect this policy.



Table III-13  
General Plan Vacant Residential Land  
1988

Vacant Designation	Potential*	
	Acres	Dwelling Units
Low Density	247.0	1,729
Medium Density	135.0	1,890
Totals	382.0	3,619

Note: Low density is 1 - 7 units per acre. Medium density is 7 - 14 units per acre.

#### Existing Affordable Housing Programs

There are seven affordable housing projects in the City, which provide a total of 373 very low, low and moderate income units. Of the total 155 units available to Section 8 qualified tenants, 154 were leased and occupied as of March 1989.

#### *El Solano Hotel*

The Riverside County Housing Authority has purchased and is remodeling the El Solano Hotel which will provide shelter for the low-income elderly. There are a total of 39 units, 25 of which are "Single Room Occupancy" units, and 14 which have kitchenettes. All tenants will qualify under HUD Section 8 regulations and pay 30% of their income towards the rent of the unit. The difference will be subsidized by the County. The City of Blythe provided technical advice, fast-tracking review of plans and no-cost inspections as a project participant.

There is no limit to the length of stay as long as the tenant remains eligible under Section 8 qualifications. In addition, the "Meals on Wheels" program at the Blythe Senior Center will provide meals for tenants. Depending on available funds, the County may, in the future, add a dining facility for tenants. The El Solano Hotel is located on South Spring Street, approximately 300 feet south of Hobsonway.

#### *Palm Drive Apartments*

The Palm Drive Apartments were completed in 1988, providing 68 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units; 14 units are reserved for those qualifying for Very Low Income Housing. All units utilize solar domestic hot water systems which help reduce utility costs to tenants. The City participated in providing financial assistance to this project through the use of an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG). These units are located at Palm Drive and Barnard Street.





*Sunset West Apartments*

Sunset West Apartments are also low and moderate income housing. Completed in 1986, the project is comprised of 50 units, constructed with FHMA financing. Sunset West Apartments are located on Lovekin Boulevard, approximately 300 feet north of Hobsonway.

*Silsby Garden Apartments*

Silsby Garden Apartments are FHA-financed, providing 50 units of low income housing. This development is located on North Ninth Street.

*Sunrise Apartments*

An FHA financed development providing 50 units of Low and Very Low Income Housing, this is a HUD Section 8 housing project. Sunrise Apartments are located on North Palm Drive at Chanslor Way.

*Broadway Manor Apartments*

Broadway Manor Apartments provide a total of 64 affordably priced units; 44 units are subsidized. These apartments are located at Broadway and 14th Avenue.

*Blythe Villa Apartments*

Blythe Villa Apartments are comprised of 52 housing units, all HUD Section 8. This project is located on Barnard Street at Palm Drive.

Redevelopment Agency Housing Fund

The City's Redevelopment Agency, formed in 1984, is required by law to provide low and moderate income housing. Section 33334.2 of the California Health and Safety Code states:

"Not less than 20 percent of all taxes which are allocated to the agency shall be used by the agency for the purpose of increasing and improving the community's supply of low and moderate income housing available at affordable housing cost....to persons and families of low and moderate income and very low income households..."

The Code further states that funds to be used for low and moderate income housing must be held in a separate Low and Moderate Housing Fund until spent.

As of August of 1989, the City had set aside approximately \$216,000 in the Housing Fund. The City does not anticipate any growth in this fund as the tax exempt bond issue which provided the majority of the funds irrevocably pledges the tax increments to debt financing. Limited growth is expected in the redevelopment project area, thereby constricting the potential for additional tax increment funds that can be set aside in the Housing Fund.

In 1988 and 1989, the City expanded the designated redevelopment project area, which allowed additional tax increments to pay debt service on tax exempt bond issues. As with earlier issues, 20% of these funds will be directed to the Housing Fund.



## Special Needs Housing

There is a direct relationship between income, ability to pay for housing and the cost of housing. For most households, the key issue is affordability; for others, the issue may be design and special features, such as for the wheelchair-bound or elderly person, or access to services, such as the housebound person, due to infirmity or lack of transportation. The households that are significantly effected by these concerns are those generally defined as having "special needs" in housing: poverty-stricken families, female-headed households with dependent children at home, the elderly and handicapped, large households and the homeless. This type of "special needs" household must spend a disproportionate share of income on housing, live in poor or overcrowded conditions or in inconvenient locations or undesirable settings.

Several basic assumptions have been made in developing the analysis that follows. First, characteristics demonstrated in the 1980 Census have remained constant in relation to Blythe's population. Second, the total population for Blythe in 1980 was 6,805 persons with 2,217 households. Third, the total 1989 population is 8,153 persons with a count of 2,596 households.

### Female-Headed Households

In 1980, there were 231 households with incomes below poverty level in the City. Of these households, 56 had a female head of household. This represents 2.5% of all the households in the City and 27% of all households headed by a female. A straight line estimate based on Department of Finance data for January 1, 1989, puts the number of female headed poverty-level households at 66; 62 of these households have children aged 17 and under at home.

### Elderly Households

In 1980, there were 347 households where the head of household was over 64 years of age. Of these, 119 were below the poverty level. Estimates for 1989 put senior citizen households at 406, of which 139 have incomes below poverty level. The Solano Hotel project, opening soon, will provide housing for 39 elderly low income persons/households. The provision of affordable housing for senior citizens must be a priority in any community as the general population ages; this is even more true for Southern California communities that attract in-migrating retirees. Senior housing projects fall into three general categories:

*Age Segregated Communities:* This type of community can be of any size and usually includes a number of recreational opportunities, geared to the pre-retiree (55 to 64 years of age) and active retiree (65 to 74 years of age). These projects generally provide entirely independent living conditions with age restrictions placed on ownership/rental.

*Congregate Living Facilities:* This type of development provides retirees in the 75 to 85 year range with independent apartments and also optional congregate meals and organized activities for residents. Medical care is not generally provided, although a nurse may visit occasionally as part of the activity program. The City of Blythe is now discussing this type of project with several possible developers.

*Life Care Communities:* These developments are generally in the upper income levels and provide for all possible needs, from independent living to full-time nursing care.





### Large Households

In 1983, there were 417 households with more than 5 persons per household; 156 were renter households. This represented 16.9% of the total households in the City. In 1989, it is estimated that 439 large households live in the City, 164 occupying rental housing. No distinct correlation can be made between income and household size.

### The Handicapped

The 1980 Census defines two types of disabilities: "work disabilities" and "lack of access to public transportation." According to the Census, there were 159 persons with a work disability and 57 persons without access to public transportation in Blythe in 1980. It is estimated that this has increased slightly in 1989 to 191 persons with a work disability and 68 persons without access to public transportation.

### The Homeless

The State Housing Guidelines require the consideration of the homeless in every housing element. The Southern California Association of Governments has identified several factors in the increase in homeless persons in this area as well as throughout the country. These include:

1. The de-institutionalization and treatment of mentally ill patients;
2. The shortage of affordable housing;
3. A lack of employment opportunities;
4. Negative family environments.

The number of homeless persons is difficult to quantify with any degree of accuracy. The homeless tend to be mobile, often moving from one city or county to another. The mild winter climate of Southern California may attract homeless in these months while the hot summer weather encourages the homeless to move elsewhere.

Church related relief efforts together with Riverside County agencies are the primary source of support for the homeless in Blythe. A local source<sup>4</sup> from the City of Blythe, responsible for coordination with Riverside County, indicates a peak total monthly caseload of 10-15 homeless persons and families during the winter months; most of these are "transient" homeless, such as a motorist stranded on I-10 with major automobile repairs needed and no available funds. In the case of transient homeless, there is a Traveller's Relief Fund (United Way agency) administered by the City of Blythe Police Department; on occasion, this fund is unable to provide relief if the person in need of assistance refuses to provide a name for verification. Other more short-term homeless are assisted with security deposits, one or two months of rent, funds for utilities or repair or replacement expenses, such as for a hot water heater or air conditioner. "Transitional" homeless total about 10-12 families or individuals a year; this category of homeless can be affected through job training and placement. Once the householder or person is suitably trained and has a job, the cause of homelessness is removed. No homeless person or family is turned away because of a lack of resources; generally each church or agency handles 1 or 2 cases per month. Most homeless persons cite loss of a job or reduction in work hours as the reason for homelessness.

<sup>4</sup> J. Newell Sorensen, Director of the Department of Development Services, City of Blythe, August 1989.



There are no specially designated emergency shelters in the City of Blythe. Homeless in need of shelter are housed in local motel units. If the homeless are transitional, services are provided by Riverside County. In some instances, the homeless person or family is relocated to another city, such as one in Coachella Valley, where more specialized services are available. If a motel unit were unavailable to provide shelter, a circumstance that has yet to arise, the homeless person or family would be relocated to another community where housing or shelter is available.

No sites for the location of emergency housing shelters are designated in Blythe as the need does not justify the expenditures involved; peak demand is estimated at 15 cases per winter month (5 winter months) with the majority of these cases transient in nature, related to the community's location to I-10. As Blythe continues to grow, this may change; the situation should be monitored on a continual basis.

#### Farm Workers

Based on the SCAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment, there are no farmworker households in the City eligible for public assistance. Due to the agricultural nature of the Palo Verde Valley, it is possible that farmworker families may reside in Blythe in the future and will require assistance or affordable housing.

#### Summary

The following have been identified as existing special needs households in the City of Blythe. Numbers cited below are based upon 1989 estimates provided by the State Department of Finance combined with straight line calculations from the 1980 and 1983 Censuses. When not available by special needs groups, typical multipliers for deriving poverty-level households are used.

Female Headed Households: 245 households

Below Poverty level: 66 households (62 with children aged 17 and under present)

Elderly Headed Households: 406 households

Below Poverty level: 139 households

Large Family Households: 439 households

Below Poverty level: Estimated at 46 households ( $439 \times 10.4\%$  [ratio of poverty level households to total households] = 46)

Persons with a Work Disability: 191 persons

Below Poverty level: Estimated at 29 persons ( $191 \times 15.4\%$  [ratio of poverty level person to total population] = 29)

Persons without access to Public Transportation: 68 persons

Below Poverty line: Estimated at 10 persons ( $68 \times 15.4\%$  [ratio of poverty level persons to total population] = 10)

Farmworkers: 0. See discussion above. No need is indicated by SCAG.





Homeless: Peak monthly caseload is 10 - 15 homeless persons and/or families during five winter months. 1 case per month is transitional homeless; all other cases are transient in nature.

### **Housing Constraints**

#### **Infrastructure Constraints to Vacant Residential Land**

There are no identifiable infrastructure constraints relative to the potential development of vacant land for residential purposes within the City of Blythe. In the past, limited capacity at the waste treatment facility and restricted water line flow potentially limited development; however, these conditions have been rectified.

#### **Market Constraints and Government Regulation**

Market and governmental factors impact the development of new housing in any community. Local government can play a limited role in housing development, primarily in the affordable housing area, which represents only a small percentage of the overall housing market; even here, opportunity to reduce costs is limited to the following areas:

1. Reduce costs by maximizing economy and efficiency, from the regulatory and development perspectives
  - A. Reduce principal cost categories associated with construction
    1. Cost of site improvements and site preparation, including standards
    2. Reduce cost of off-site improvements
    3. Reduce cost of construction, including standards, especially for density of units. Reduce size of units. Reduce expenditure per square foot.
  - B. Reduce miscellaneous costs associated with financing and fees
    1. Cost of financing and interest
    2. Cost of fees, permits, processing, etc.
2. Reduce cost through subsidy
  - A. By the public, such as use of public funds or land
  - B. By the developer
    1. Cost absorbed by the developer from profits he would otherwise make
    2. Cost passed forward by the developer to the buyers of the market-rate units in the development
    3. Cost passed backward in that developer will not spend as much for the land (cost absorbed by the initial landowner)

Any housing program that is designed to make affordable housing available to the citizens of the community must be carefully considered, even when particular groups are targeted, such as the elderly or low income, as the occupants of the units. The program must give conscious consideration of the burden that is being passed on to the developer and the extent to which costs may really be reduced.

There are approximately 382 net acres of vacant residential land in the City, of which about 135 acres are suitable for affordable housing; this land is designated in the General Plan for medium density (7 to 14 units per acre) development. A total of 1,890 units could be built





upon these lands; this figure could increase were density bonuses applicable. Considering the full build-out potential for all 382 net acres, there is enough appropriately designated and zoned land in the City of Blythe to accommodate housing needs over the next five years.

Cost of land ranges from \$10,000 an acre and upwards, depending on location and infrastructure provided. A typical residential lot is priced between \$12,000 and \$15,000 fully improved. Construction costs of housing are also favorable when considered with other Southern California communities. In the past, developers with approved projects in the City have had difficulty in obtaining construction financing; this was due to the perception of Blythe as an economically depressed community or one in which the economic base was not sufficiently broad to provide protection from loan defaults. With the nearby completion of the first phases of the State Correctional Facility, residential construction activity has increased and single family mortgage financing in particular has become more readily available.

#### Development Application Processing Time and Fees

The time required to process residential development projects in the City varies according to the scope of the proposal. Tentative approval of single family subdivisions requires approximately 30 to 45 days, including approval by the City Council. Development plans for multi-unit projects can take from 30 to 60 days, depending on the complexity. The City Council also hears and approves all such development proposals.

Building permit and development fees for new construction are set based on the individual project's value and the number of units proposed. Fees are currently low and it is not anticipated that fees be increased to unreasonable levels; refer to the fee schedule in the Administrative Section of the Uniform Building Code for current building-related fees. Other fees may be imposed as part of the conditions of approval or mitigation measures associated with a specific project. The City applies the Uniform Building Code with some local amendments which are not restrictive to the development of affordable housing.

#### Energy Conservation

The City is located in the Colorado division of the Sonoran Desert. As such, the City has encouraged the development of plans which are sensitive to building orientation, proper overhangs, adequate insulation and glazing and proper use of landscaping. The City will continue to review project plans for energy efficiency and the comfort and economy of the residents.

#### Projected Housing Needs

The Southern California Association of Governments has adopted the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) to project housing needs in five year increments for each county and city in the region. The model was revised in 1988; results have been used in this document.



Projected Housing Needs

Table III-14 includes housing needs for the City of Blythe, both existing and projected. The first two categories, "Existing Need for Affordable Housing" and "Future Need for Housing", were prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments. The "Rehabilitation Needs" data was prepared by Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc. The State Department of Corrections estimated the last category, "Housing Units Needed to Accommodate State Correctional Facility Employees". Forecasts of housing demand by SCAG did not include the units necessary to meet the needs of prison-related employee households.

Historically, construction of residential units in the City has been erratic and slow; population growth has outpaced housing unit increases since 1980. In the past, developers have had difficulty in obtaining construction financing for certain types of projects that have been approved by the City of Blythe. A pressing need was evident in 1987 with the imminent arrival of State Correctional Facility employees; this need was not immediately met but the production of units has increased since this point in time.





Table III-14  
Housing Needs for the City of Blythe  
1989 - 1994

<u>Existing Need for Affordable Housing</u> <sup>5</sup>	
(Low-income households paying more than 30% of gross income for housing expenses)	532
<u>Future Need for Housing</u> <sup>6</sup>	
New construction units from 7/89 to 7/94	216
Very low income (50% or less of median) -37	
Low income (50 - 80% of median) -56	
Moderate (80 - 120% of median) -38	
High income (120%+ of median) -85	
New construction units to accommodate household growth (7/89 - 7/94)	127
Vacancy adjustment units to raise vacancy rate to 2% for single family & 5% for multi-family from 7/89 to 7/94	9
Demolition adjustment units to account for units eliminated from inventory from 7/89 to 7/94	80
"Gap" units to account for time period from 1/88 to 6/89	63
<u>Rehabilitation Needs</u> <sup>7</sup>	
Rehabilitation units (Identified in 1987 as units in Poor or Unacceptable condition)	238
Conservation units (Existing affordable housing units including mobile homes)	433
<u>Housing Units Needed to Accommodate State Correctional Facility Employees</u> <sup>8</sup>	
(Assumes 190% capacity with 987 employees)	
New construction or installation through 1991	737
Single family homes -527	
Multi-family units -184	
Mobile homes -26	

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<sup>5</sup> This estimate includes many of the households that are mentioned in the **Special Needs** section of the Element. Caution should be exercised in the use of the data as doublecounting may occur.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Estimate by Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc. derived from a 1987 survey of housing conditions.

<sup>8</sup> Refer to section in this Element for specific details and discussion of housing need associated with the State Correctional Facility.



## **State Correctional Facility Generated Housing Demand**

The construction of the State Chuckawalla Correctional Facility in the vicinity of Blythe is expected to generate a substantial demand for market-rate housing units. Housing demand cited above in the list of quantified housing needs was based on data provided by the State Department of Corrections which noted a need for 737 units for prison employees; this is in addition to the anticipated rate of growth in the City from 1988 to 1993.

Employment generated housing demand by the workers affiliated with the correctional institution will be the most significant source of Blythe's residential growth over the next few years. The following discussion assumes prison employment of a level to support the facility at 190% capacity and has been adjusted for employment from the local labor pool. This level of operation requires 987 employees, 250 of which will be locally hired.

### **Single Family Development**

The fiscal impact study associated with the State Correctional Facility indicates that the development and operation of the institution at 190% of capacity will result in a demand for approximately 527 single family dwellings. Several portions of the City are well suited for this particular type of residential development. Single family residential neighborhoods are those somewhat removed from commercial development and subjected to minimum through-traffic. Single family neighborhoods should be typically serviced by local streets, which meet with collector streets which in turn feed to arterial roadways. Ample vacant land that is appropriately zoned and designated in accordance with the General Plan has adequate capacity to support this number of units as well as those required to accommodate expected household growth not associated with the prison.

### **Multi-Family Development**

The direct generation of additional demand for State Correctional Facility employee housing is projected to require the development of approximately 184 multi-family housing units. Inasmuch as prison employees will generate as great a demand for rental as for ownership units<sup>9</sup>, it is possible that a greater number of apartments and condominiums could be required. These are likely to be developed in smaller projects. The three acre 42-unit La Mirage condominium project, recently approved by the City Council, could well serve as a model in terms of size and quality of development for future condominium and apartment projects in the City.

### **Mobile Home Development**

It is estimated that institutionally generated housing demand will necessitate the addition of 26 mobile homes to the housing stock.

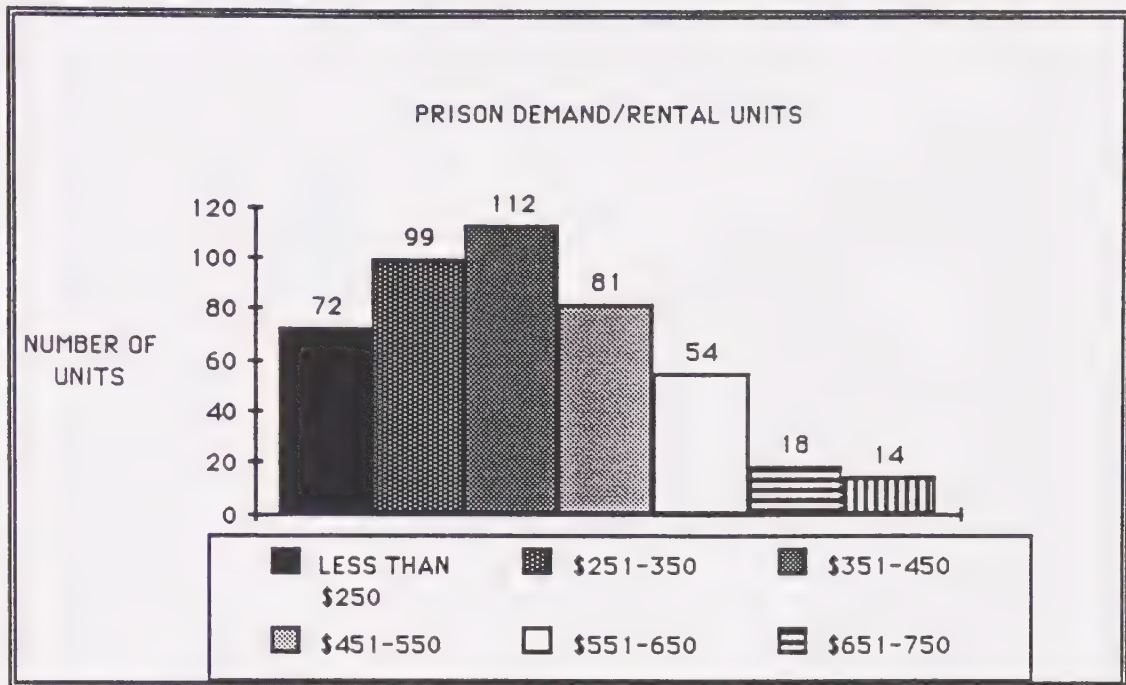
### **Prison Related Rental Demand**

The more than 36% of prison employees who are likely to be renters will comprise approximately 166 households which can afford rents of \$451 or more per month. The largest percentage of these employees, 47%, will be able to afford rents in the range of \$250 to \$450 monthly. The prison will generate a total demand for 450 rental units.

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<sup>9</sup> Estimate by the State Department of Corrections notes that tenure among employees is fairly evenly divided between owners and renters.





#### Prison Related Ownership Demand

State Correctional Facility employment will generate a demand for approximately 300 ownership units, either condominiums or single family dwellings. More than 42% of the home buying prison employees are expected to be able to afford mortgage payments of \$551 or more per month, equating to a demand for a total of 126 units in this cost category. Of these 126 upper end units, approximately 90 households will be able to afford mortgages in excess of \$650 per month.

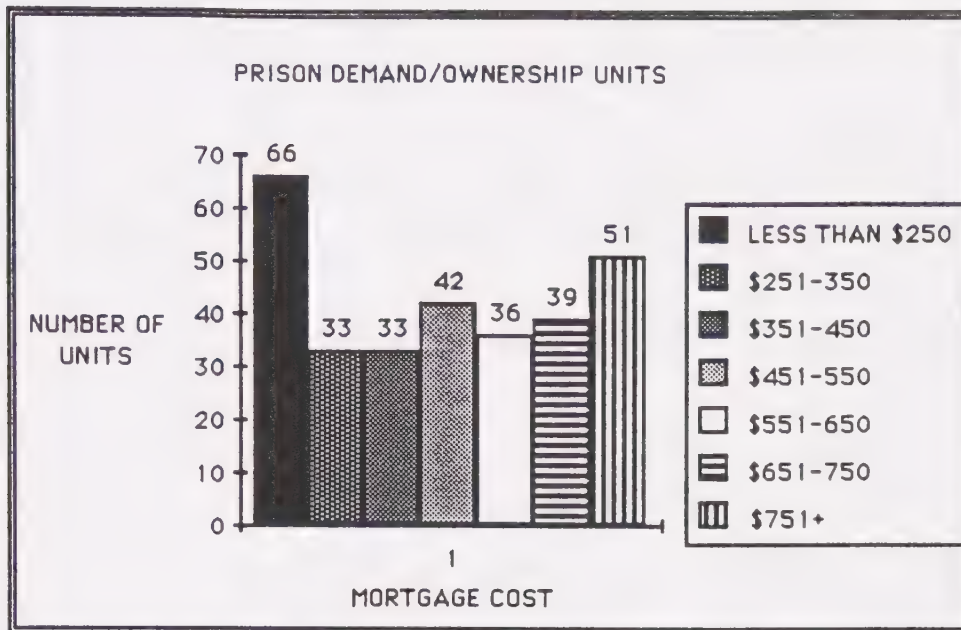
#### Note on Progress of the State Correctional Facility

The Chuckawalla Valley State Prison opened in December of 1988. The two final facilities are scheduled to open in January of 1990. A total of 690 employees are then anticipated. As of August 1989, there were 397 employees working at the prison; 102 of these were local hires. In September of 1988, the City's Economic Profile noted:

"The State estimates that approximately . . . 737 (residences) at 190% of capacity will be required for new prison employees. This housing is not available at the present time; however, a total of 599 units are currently under construction or under consideration by the Planning Department and City Council. Projects under consideration include 200 apartment units, 175 single family home lots, 42 condominium units and a 256 mobile home (manufactured housing) subdivision."







#### REVIEW OF HOUSING PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS 1985 - 1989

The 1984 Housing Element for the City of Blythe set out an ambitious program to assist low income households and provide for the betterment of housing conditions on a community-wide basis. Implementation programs were based upon four housing problem areas: quantity, quality, cost and opportunity. Additionally, three general actions were proposed.

The following objectives for 1984 - 1989 were set forth:

- 304 declining housing units: Improve 30 units annually
- 608 deteriorating housing units: Rehabilitate 41 units annually
- 262 dilapidated housing units: Remove 21 units annually
- 506 households in need of financial assistance: Assist 10% annually of total need
- To provide housing for 30 new households, replace 21 dilapidated units removed each year and to provide 6 additional units to balance demand and supply, 52 units annually must be constructed. [6 additional units needed to achieve ideal vacancy rates; 30 additional units needed to accommodate new households]

#### Housing Quantity Action Programs

- Make information on housing needs and assistance programs available to developers, builders and others in the housing industry

Completed. The City had several publications prepared, such as an economic profile for the community, in order to provide basic information about the housing situation in Blythe. Several seminars were sponsored by the City to answer questions and stimulate interest in various housing programs and possible financing techniques. Information continues to be provided upon request.



- Keep informed about the availability of government programs designed to assist the City in addressing housing problems

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Director of Planning. Contacts established at County and State levels. Frequent contact is made and input is regularly given on proposed housing legislation and possible programs. City participates in all appropriate programs administered by Riverside County and the State.

- Encourage new housing construction to meet needs of new households of all economic levels and replace dilapidated units

On-going. Broad range of activities undertaken by the City includes: educational seminars for the housing and financing industries, builders and developers relative to new housing construction and mortgage loan options; review of ordinances and the planning and building process to determine obstacles or inappropriate timing; direct extension of a 0% loan for the construction of 68 units. There are several designated redevelopment areas in the City; pursuant to the Blythe Redevelopment Project No. 1 Plan, at least 30% of all new or rehabilitated units developed in these areas will be available for low and moderate income families.

- Support State legislation permitting and encouraging public and private retirement fund systems to invest more of their assets in California housing, particularly low and moderate income housing

Completed. The City Manager and Planning Director worked with several State legislators in developing appropriate legislation; status of legislation at State level is unknown at this time.

- Utilize CDBG funds to finance activities related to construction of lower-income housing (site clearance, land acquisition, public improvements, etc.)

Completed. The City receives CDBG monies from the County of Riverside as a pass-through entitlement. A variety of funding sources, including CDBG, was used for infrastructure improvements, such as storm drain and water line installation and sewer lift station construction. The Redevelopment Plan provides for all authorized CDBG activities, such as acquisition and clearance, to be implemented in appropriate areas of the City.

#### Housing Quality Action Programs

- Encourage the rehabilitation of declining and deteriorated housing, particularly low-valued units that provide shelter for low income households

On-going. The City provides advice as requested to households interested in rehabilitation. Systematic code enforcement is undertaken in various neighborhoods throughout the City on an as-needed basis. Additionally, housing conditions surveys





are routinely performed to assess any major shifts in the condition of the community's housing stock. The last survey was completed 1987-88. Compared to a 1983 survey, there were fewer housing units in need of substantial repair. The City also has a CDBG-funded home repair program in order to support rehabilitation activities in the community.

- Support and urge increased funding for government programs that assist rehabilitation of deteriorated housing units

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Planning Director. Frequent contact at County and State level, as well as with Federal agencies, is maintained in order to ensure adequate input. Blythe is particularly active in promoting programs and support for communities impacted by the location of correctional facilities.

- Urge new tax laws that provide incentives to rehabilitate low income housing units

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Planning Director. Frequent contact at County and State level, as well as with Federal agencies, is maintained in order to ensure adequate input. Blythe is particularly active in promoting proposals that support communities impacted by the location of correctional facilities.

- Upgrade public facilities and services in declining or deteriorated neighborhoods in order to facilitate redevelopment

On-going. All upgrading in Redevelopment designated areas will be in conformance with the City's Redevelopment Plan. Completed public improvements include an upgraded domestic water system, expanded storm drainage facilities, an expanded sewage treatment plant and the installation of street lights throughout the City.

- \$135,000 storm drain installation (Barnard/Lovekin)
- \$400,000 storm drain system improvements
- \$250,000 sewage lift station installation
- \$150,000 park improvements
- \$250,000 pressurize water system and improve fire flow
- \$600,000 upgrade sewage treatment capacity and pond clean-up

- Ensure housing growth is coordinated with the provision of adequate service and facilities

On-going. In conformance with CEQA requirements and applicable City ordinances, all development projects proposed in the City are reviewed and evaluated with regard to the provision of adequate services and facilities. Non-contiguous development, as a general rule, is not permitted.

- Investigate the feasibility of using provisions of Marks-Foran Residential Rehabilitation Act to provide low interest rehabilitation loans

Incomplete. Limited staff resources prohibited pursuing this option.



- Encourage participation in Home Improvement Program administered by the County Housing Authority to increase housing rehabilitation

Completed. After briefing, appropriate City staff were then able to refer possible participants to the County. Close coordination between the City's Code Enforcement staff and the Riverside County staff is an on-going high-priority function in providing services to the citizens.

- Inform the public about self-help techniques in order to enable residents to maintain and improve their homes and neighborhoods

On-going. The City provides advice as requested to households interested in home improvement. Systematic code enforcement is undertaken in various neighborhoods throughout the City on an as-needed basis. Additionally, housing and neighborhood conditions surveys are routinely performed to assess any major shifts in the condition of the community's housing stock as well as trends in neighborhoods in terms of number of Code violations, land use incompatibilities, deficient public facilities, etc. Such a survey was completed for some neighborhoods in 1988 in conjunction with redevelopment planning efforts.

- Strengthen Code enforcement program in order to ensure adequate maintenance of existing housing; support public and private efforts to develop training programs for housing and building code inspectors

Completed. Code enforcement staff attended International Conference of Building Officials training sessions; staff continues to be involved with this organization in order to remain up-to-date and informed about methods of Code enforcement.

- Support strong enforcement of State Revenue and Taxation Code which prohibits owners of substandard units, cited for Code violations, from receiving State income tax deductions with respect to such dwellings

Incomplete. Limited staff resources prohibited pursuing this option.

- Consider adoption of local occupancy inspection ordinance to discourage blight, maintain property values and protect buyers and renters

Incomplete. Limited staff resources prohibited pursuing this option.

- Intensify program of removal of dilapidated housing units but coordinate with services to relocate displaced occupants

On-going. Thirty-eight (38) units have been removed since 1985. Relocation of occupants is coordinated with Riverside County Housing Authority.





- Provide for relocation housing to complement Code enforcement and rehabilitation programs

On-going. Relocation of occupants is coordinated with Riverside County Housing Authority.

#### Housing Cost Action Programs

- Work with developers, labor unions, realtors, lenders, government officials and citizen groups to inform the public of ways to reduce housing costs

On-going. The City had several publications prepared, such as an economic profile for the community, in order to provide basic information about the housing situation in Blythe. Several seminars were sponsored by the City to answer questions and stimulate interest in various housing programs and possible financing techniques. Purveyors of utilities in the Blythe area provided educational information relative to conservation techniques for distribution to the public. Information continues to be provided upon request or during the course of review by the City when specific project proposals or building plans are submitted. The City has also made low-cost construction loans available to reduce cost to developers/builders and enhance the affordability of the units.

- Urge State and Federal governments to channel adequate amounts of mortgage and rehabilitation money to housing sector

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Planning Director. Frequent contact at State and Federal levels is maintained in order to ensure adequate input. Blythe is particularly active in promoting programs and support for communities impacted by the location of correctional facilities. As Blythe did not experience population growth in the early 1980s and demand for housing remained flat, financing for mortgages and rehabilitating homes was not a high priority among area-located lenders. This situation was compounded by a lack of economic growth and failed real estate loans.

- Urge State to lessen importance of property taxes for financing local government and use less regressive taxes instead; advocate reforms in the property tax system which would shift costs of non-property-related services away from the property tax

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Planning Director. Frequent contact at State level is maintained in order to ensure adequate input.

- Recommend property tax reduction measures provide tax savings on rental units to be passed on to renters

Progress unknown. There is no documented indication of any action taken.



- Encourage residential lenders to develop and test new mortgage instruments in order to increase opportunities for home ownership

Completed. Several meetings were held with lenders in the area to discuss possible financing techniques. Generally, lenders are constrained by necessary underwriting criteria. More flexible financing techniques that were made available on a broad basis, such as variable rate mortgages, were also obtainable by qualified home purchasers in Blythe.

- Promote the development of lower-cost housing types such as cooperatives and condominiums and encourage home ownership opportunities

Completed. The City Code was reviewed in order to ensure that a variety of housing types were permitted. A higher density condo project was approved for development (42 units); these units will be affordable for low and moderate income households once construction is complete (anticipated within the next 18 months). Condominium conversion proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis in order to assess the impact upon lower-income households. It is expected that the conversion proponent would mitigate any adverse impact to such households.

- Review zoning, subdivision and building ordinances for possible removal of provisions which add to housing construction costs without contributing to health, safety or well-being, and consider adding provisions that encourage a variety of housing designs, tenure types and costs

Completed. Necessary ordinances have been reviewed and evaluated. The building permit process has been automated via computer in order to provide a faster tracking system and reduce time involved in obtaining approvals to proceed. The land development review process has been expedited where possible, reducing time to 6 to 8 weeks for approvals for some types of projects. Mobile homes and manufactured housing in conformance with State and HUD guidelines are permitted in the City when applicable ordinances are satisfied.

- Review housing permit review procedures to identify areas where they may be accelerated to eliminate delays

Completed. See comments above. Tract map review, the environmental review process and zone changes now take less time, going from about 4 months to a total of 2 months in process.

- Support legislation that will increase the tax on profits from the sale of homes or apartments held by owners for only a short period of time and simply for speculative purposes

Incomplete. Limited staff resources prohibited pursuing this option.



- Support inclusion of price escalation controls in government-assisted programs that provide low and moderate income housing in order to ensure that the units remain available to low and moderate income persons

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Planning Director. Frequent contact with agencies responsible for program implementation is maintained in order to ensure adequate input; staff has consistently recommended price escalation controls.

- Encourage energy conservation in construction and rehabilitation of housing; support testing of alternate home energy sources, new housing forms and construction materials that conserve energy and reduce housing costs

Completed. The City implemented State Title XXIV Energy Conservation Building Code to ensure energy-conserving construction methods. During design review, staff evaluates building orientation and shading of glazed areas with an emphasis on decreasing cooling costs. Local purveyors of utilities also provide educational materials to consumers as well as building trades regarding opportunities for conservation.

#### Housing Opportunity Action Programs

- Pursue all available housing assistance funds from Federal and State agencies in order to increase housing opportunities for low and moderate income persons

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Director of Planning. Contacts were established at Federal and State levels. Frequent contact is made and input is regularly given on possible programs. City participates in all appropriate programs administered by State and Federal agencies.

- Support legislation to increase maximum limits on loans insured under Federal mortgage insurance programs and encourage the State to increase mortgage limits and extend terms for the CalVet loan program

On-going. Task assigned to City Manager and Director of Planning. Contacts were established at State and Federal level. Contact is made and input is given on proposed changes in mortgage limits and terms, as necessary.

- Encourage affirmative marketing program for housing and work with developers, realtors, lenders and community service organizations to solicit support for such programs

On-going. The City has established a fair housing process whereby complaints regarding equal opportunity and unrestricted access to housing are handled and resolved. All Federally and State mandated steps are provided for in Blythe's procedures with any necessary agencies notified of any complaint regarding housing discrimination. Information is available on an as-requested basis; educational briefings are also available for community groups.





- Discourage new assisted housing where it would increase the concentration of low income households within a single area and encourage housing developments that include both market-rate and assisted housing in the same area

On-going. The current pattern of land uses permitted by the General Plan and subsequently through the Zoning Ordinance distributes residential uses of varying densities fairly evenly throughout all neighborhoods of the City. There is vacant land appropriately zoned for lower income housing available. Efforts are made to locate such dwelling units in areas that are close to shopping, schools, public transportation and other services, dependent on the type of household to be served. Proposals are reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis to ensure good location within the community as a whole. Existing and approved affordable housing projects are located throughout the City; there are no undue concentrations of assisted housing.

- Ensure that rent limits on Federally assisted housing reflect market conditions in order to increase housing opportunities

On-going. The City provides local data and other input to appropriate Federal agencies who set rent limits for various programs.

- Strive to improve job opportunities and increase the incomes of low income households.

On-going. The City has been extremely proactive in recruiting industrial development and employment centers to establish in the Blythe area. The Economic Profile for the community was prepared under contract with the City so that up-to-date information could be readily and conveniently available to interested businesses. The City also cooperates with the Riverside Economic Development effort. One of the fruits of this active recruitment was the location of a State Correctional Facility near Blythe. To date, 102 local people have been selected to fill positions at this facility.

- Support efforts towards a possible program of State assistance for relocation benefits for persons displaced by local Code enforcement and other public projects

On-going. Current relocation activities are limited in Blythe. If relocation is necessary due to a sanctioned redevelopment program, any displacees would be relocated in a manner consistent with State regulations and requirements of the Redevelopment Plan; typically, this involves relocation of the person or household into another unit that is in good repair and of comparable size given financial restraints regarding replacement value of the originally occupied unit. Displacement does not typically occur as a result of enforcement activities; however, in the event that relocation is necessary, Riverside County is the designated agency that provides assistance.

- Provide counseling and assistance to enable displaced households to move to areas outside existing low income and minority concentrations

On-going. See comment immediately above.



- Deposit public funds in lending institutions that make a higher than average proportion of their residential loans in mortgage deficient areas

Open. The City of Blythe adopted by resolution a policy statement relative to the depositing of funds in lending institutions that would provide higher than average levels of residential mortgage financing in mortgage deficient areas of the community. The City has informed all area-wide financial institutions of this policy; to date, no financial institution has responded.

- Support efforts by the State to publish a "Homebuyer's Guide" and State legislation requiring real estate licensees to provide full information about homes being offered for sale.

Completed. The State published such a guide. Other comparable information is made available as needed, for example, handouts that are prepared by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The City cooperates with local realtors, providing assistance as needed.

- Support State legislation which clarifies rights and obligations concerning security deposits, broadens protection to tenants from retaliatory eviction and enables tenants to withhold payment of rent for needed repairs

Incomplete. Limited staff resources prohibited pursuing this option.

- Support State legislation providing for the establishment of landlord-tenant mediation and grievance boards, where necessary, to improve landlord-tenant relations through public education, mediation, conciliation of disputes and investigation of complaints

Incomplete. Limited staff resources prohibited pursuing this option.

#### General Action Programs

- Maintain the Housing Advisory Committee

The Housing Advisory Committee was disbanded in 1984 or 1985. When a need arises for a task-oriented forum to discuss a particular issue or provide a recommendation to a decision-making body or program agency, the appropriate group of persons is convened and action is taken. Limited staff resources and seasonally-related housing issues makes year-round staff support of an on-going committee infeasible.

- Coordinate housing efforts with public and private sectors

On-going. See many of the above specific comments.

- Revise the Housing Element as needed

On-going. Revisions will be undertaken as needed or in conformance with all State requirements, whichever is appropriate.





### Summary of Programs from 1984 - 1989

Specific numeric goals were not attained and several activities were not initiated or completed as outlined in the 1984 Housing Element. Below is a very brief discussion of difficulties or obstacles that were encountered that precluded full compliance with outlined goals and objectives.

1. Lack of available funding. There have been dramatic decreases in State and Federal funding for a wide spectrum of housing and housing-related programs in the past few years. Unfortunately, limited growth and a restricted economic base locally did not allow for shifting the burden to the community beyond what has already occurred. Options for passing along costs to citizens of the community are limited in terms of what is legally and realistically possible.
2. Staffing limitations. With the economic base of the community, for all practical purposes, fixed throughout the 1980s, there has been little increase in the General Fund resources available with which to implement the many strategies and activities outlined in the 1984 Housing Element. Recognition must be given to staffing limitations.
3. Conflicts in priorities. There is the opportunity for many conflicts in priorities to arise during the course of the residential development process. For example, there is the issue of affordability which must be balanced against the assessment of development fees that increase the cost of the unit; however, by the same token, if the fees are not collected from the developer, and most likely passed on to prospective home buyers, then the community as a whole must absorb the cost of development. Trade-offs between priorities that deal with environmental quality, neighborhood quality and livability, adequate infrastructure, protection of the long-term public investment, affordability and adequate numbers and types of housing must be made. A given emphasis in one direction caused changes in staff work programs and priorities to the extent that other strategies were dropped from the list of active projects. Given limited staff and budgetary resources, this flexibility is essential so that adjustments can be readily made when community values shift or change.
4. Institutional barriers. These include barriers and obstacles that are beyond the outright control of the City. Examples include financial, which involves techniques and methods of property appraisal, loan and insurance underwriting criteria, etc. Other barriers include: the history of low-density development in the community and a strong very traditional preference for detached single family units on individual parcels of land; attitudes and perceptions that the community has relative to low cost housing; regulations and restrictions at all levels of government relative to the development of land, etc. The City has made every effort to ensure that any institutionalized barrier or obstacle which is in their control has been evaluated with regard to costs versus benefits.
5. Housing production costs. The cost of providing housing and housing-related programs has escalated in recent years while the funding available to the City has decreased; couple this with increasing demand and the City is faced, along with other housing developers, with the difficult position of producing or stimulating the production of affordably priced units.



6. Number of strategies, activities and programs. The 1984 Housing Element listed more than forty strategies, activities or programs to be pursued. This magnitude is unrealistic given staffing levels and work programs; efforts must not be so diluted that the true issues related to housing go unattended.

## HOUSING GOALS

1. To provide a wide range of adequate, affordable housing for all economic segments of the City.
2. To improve and preserve the unique character of existing neighborhoods.
3. To meet the goals set forth by the Southern California Association of Governments for the City's Fair Share Housing needs.

## HOUSING OBJECTIVES

1. Improve 40 dwelling units annually: includes public and private efforts for maintenance and home repairs for otherwise structurally sound units.
2. Rehabilitate 20 dwelling units annually; includes public and private efforts involved in undertaking rehabilitation of major structural elements that are no longer sound (walls, roof, electrical and plumbing systems, etc.)
3. Remove 10 dwelling units annually from the housing inventory; includes public and private efforts involved in eliminating dilapidated dwelling units.
4. Address 10% of the Urgent Very Low Income Household and Persons need annually. The overall existing urgent need is defined as those currently residing households or persons with incomes below the poverty level.

56	Female headed households below poverty level
100	Elderly headed households below poverty level (39 assisted in 1989)
46	Large family households below poverty level
29	Work disabled persons below poverty level
10	Handicapped persons w/no access to transportation below poverty level

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241      Total Urgent Very Low Income Households and Persons Need

5. Address 10% of the Low Income Paying too Much for Housing Need annually. SCAG indicates that the existing need for affordable housing is a total of 532 low income households that pay more than 30% of gross income for housing expenses. Assuming that the above households and persons with incomes below poverty level are a subset of this group, this leaves a remainder of 291 low income households that are paying too much for housing (532 - 241 = 291).





6. Assist 12 homeless cases per month, one of which is a transitional homeless person or family. This is applicable for the winter months. A lower level of assistance will be provided during the summer months.
7. Conserve the existing 433 affordable housing units now in the City. This includes the units as listed in the "Existing Affordable Housing Programs" section of this Element as well as the 60 mobile homes located in the City.
8. Construct 20 new units annually for very low and low income households and persons. Includes public and private efforts.

## HOUSING POLICIES

1. Improve, preserve and rehabilitate existing sub-standard and/or aging housing.

Program 1-A: Enforce all City codes regarding the maintenance of existing housing.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: Ongoing

Program 1-B: Use all available subsidies (grants, loans, etc.) to rehabilitate sub-standard owner and renter occupied low income housing in the City.

Responsible Agencies: City of Blythe Department of Development Services, City of Blythe Redevelopment Agency, County of Riverside, California Department of Housing and Community Development  
Financing: Department Budget, Redevelopment Funds, Community Development Block Grant Funds  
Schedule: Ongoing

Program 1-C: In the event that low income housing is eliminated for any reason, require the owner of the land to relocate those residents affected.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe, City Redevelopment Agency  
Financing: Private Funds  
Schedule: Ongoing

2. Ensure that sufficient residential lands are available to satisfy the future needs of the City.

Program 2-A: Designate sufficient appropriate residential lands on the Land Use and Zoning maps for all types of housing, providing the mix necessary for the diverse economic mix in the City.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: 1989 (now underway)





3. Guarantee non-discriminatory access to all housing, regardless of income, race, religion, sex, marital status or national origin.

Program 3-A: Protect the long-term affordability of housing by explicitly stating in conditions of project approval what special vehicles or tools will be used to screen applicants.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: Ongoing

Program 3-B: Investigate the use of Community Development Block Grant funds to help finance low and moderate income projects.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services, City Redevelopment Agency.  
Financing: Department Budget, Community Development Block Grant funds  
Schedule: Ongoing. City presently receives CDBG funds from Riverside County as a pass-through entitlement.

Program 3-C: Develop a program to most cost-effectively use Housing Fund monies for the development of low income housing, whether in the Redevelopment area or elsewhere in the City limits.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Redevelopment Agency  
Financing: 20% set-aside Housing Fund  
Schedule: 1990.

Program 3-D: Establish a program by which a developer can receive a maximum 25% density bonus if the proposed project provides at least 25% of its units for low and very low income housing; or at least 50% of the project will be restricted to persons meeting minimum age and/or income standards.

Responsible Agencies: City of Blythe Department of Development Services and City Redevelopment Agency.  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: Approved conceptually. Zoning ordinance to be amended in late 1989 or early 1990.

Program 3-E: Provide for the special needs of the elderly through requirements in the zoning ordinances.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services.  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: 1989

The first part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

The second part of the report is a detailed account of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

The third part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

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The thirteenth part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

The fourteenth part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

The fifteenth part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

The sixteenth part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

The seventeenth part of the report is a summary of the work done during the last year. It covers the main results of the research and the progress made in the various projects.

Program 3-F: In conformance with Sections 6582.1 and 6582.2 of the California Government Code, the City will establish zoning and building code procedures and requirements for second units in single family and multi-family zones.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: 1989

Program 3-G: Monitor the needs of the homeless in the City so that an appropriate shelter site, sufficient to house the anticipated need in the City, can be set aside in the future when necessary. The City should consider providing the funds for the construction of this shelter through public funding, in conjunction with the County of Riverside and private relief organizations.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Private Funds  
Schedule: On-going

4. Preserve existing numbers of mobile homes and consider proposals for additional well designed parks at affordable rates.

Program 4-A: The City will implement a program to maintain existing numbers of mobile homes and promote the development of new units, to assure affordable rates.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Department Budget  
Schedule: 1989

Program 4-B: If a mobile home park is converted or destroyed, the owner of the land will be required to relocate residents to comparable accommodations, in accordance with applicable State law.

Responsible Agency: City of Blythe Department of Development Services  
Financing: Private Funding  
Schedule: Ongoing





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